

**Problems and Goals of the Armenian Diaspora
in Light of the Karabakh Issue**

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In the past 22 years, beginning with the mass actions of Armenians in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR), the Armenian Diaspora has accomplished much, and as a whole, has carried out the important objective of protecting interests, in both the Republic of Armenia and the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. The work of the Diaspora, despite of many contradictions, confusions and mistakes, is highly esteemed in the international public arena. At the same time, in recent years, Armenia and NKR have observed passive activity in the public and political organizations of the Diaspora, socially and politically. First, this occurs as a result of the lack of indispensable understanding among the Diaspora of their important place and role in the realization of actual issues concerning their homeland of Armenia. It has become obvious that Armenia's politicians have not appeared to be interested in political, public and economic integration of the Diaspora and their homeland. Primary factors contributing to the distancing of the Diaspora from Armenia include the corrupt system, fraudulent economic activities, lack of economic competition, extreme forms undemocratic elections of all levels, and the limited influence of mass media on the society. Armenia has rather outdated public relations and being a part of modern political system there is a lack of democratic political traditions in Armenia. Even until now, there has been no modern civil society and certain traditions of "vertical" management, criminal methods of administration are still observed. Certainly, the new generation of the Diaspora, which has received a more progressive education in democratic countries around the world, cannot apprehend the condition of life in Armenia. However, the conditions in Armenia cannot be used to justify the passive position of the Diaspora. Socially active groups in Diaspora must understand, that a new time has come and there are new pleas. These are not only pleas of globalization, but also the problems connected with a new alignment of forces in the world and new balance of forces. With the independence of Armenia, the Diaspora has the opportunity to obtain importance and a new role in world policy. Before Diaspora lays a problem of understanding the purposes and methods of traditional activity and integrating the new structures, which have potential to overcome narrow frameworks of political groups and incorporate various layers of the public. If the Diaspora wishes continue successfully

addressing and affecting the problems of Armenia, it should be organized as network structure characterized by diversity and flexibility. Unfortunately, in numerous countries prominent people present organizations of Diaspora with alternative sonorous names, but in practice these organizations are generated around the wealthy families' inner circles, which ultimately limit the organization. As a result, these given groups develop not into public organizations of the Diaspora, but become dominated by the more influential centers of force in their respective host countries. The Diaspora needs not only new organizational structures, but also a certain social and political philosophy, a definition of priorities and a combination of interests of various layers and groups of a society that would allow them to perceive and participate more successfully in social and political processes in Armenia and their host countries. The given problems are closely connected with problems in Armenia and in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. The Diaspora should stop to taking a position of the detached bystander, and should understand those processes, which occur in Armenia and particularly in NKR.

It has been 16 years since the conclusion of an armistice in the province of Karabakh, but the Armenian people of Karabakh have not been able to achieve the recognition of their rights and safety. As a result of the personal and group interest of the three presidents of independent Armenia, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic has appeared to be absolutely and finally torn off from the occurring, processes in connection with existing problems. This is due to the fact that the Armenian government became especially egoistical, and the personal interests of the politicians connected with their own political ideals and representative ambitions resulted with the desire to not have any unexpectedness in Karabakh. The Armenian government needs an obedient, predictable, and silent Karabakh, which is ready to execute any decision at anybody's will, as long as it is not at will of the people living the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. During the process of so-called settlement of the Karabakh problem arguments such as the territories lost as a result of external aggression, destiny of the Armenian refugees, the condition of the historical Armenian monuments in Azerbaijan, have absolutely dropped out of a field of vision. As a result of criminal activity of local administration, which worked under political elite of Yerevan, number of immigrants in the released territories, especially in Lachin and other areas was reduced. As a whole, the problem in developing the released grounds in Karabakh, such as moving a significant number of the population there has not been accomplished. This problem was quite elementary to solve, but the indifferent and criminal-minded attitude toward this problem, has left the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic without a major political foundation. However, the main question of

consideration of the Karabakh problem is negotiations, which they call settlement. At the basis of the given settlement are the, so-called, Madrid principles, which are developed by proceeding from certain formal representations about regional safety and about an opportunity to provide long peaceful co-existence. It is unnecessary to say that in the process of settling the Karabakh issue is the problem of the different interests of the world powers which are interested in purchasing new geopolitical positions in region. But in of itself, the Madrid principles assume to neglect the real existence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic as result of self-determination, the appeal to borders of the Nagorno-Karabakh area of the Soviet Azerbaijan, which for a long time has not existed, and the withdrawal of the released territories. In political polemics this are constantly referred to as the « seven areas » that is, more likely, not real, but virtual concept. Actually, around Nagorno parts of Karabakh, there is a narrow strip of the ground that without rises doubt under not only existence of the Karabakh Armenians, but also the real sovereignty of Republic of Armenia. Recently, the political management of Armenia has collided Armenian Karabakh, which expect catastrophic reality, and Armenia tries to cite all the given arguments in the international political debate. But valuable historically time is lost, since in international relations there were certain stereotypes in the so-called principles and political lexicon, and all this is difficult enough for overcoming now when a management of Armenia many times, under various circumstances, agreed with the given logic scheme of settlement.

The state education aspiring international recognition of its sovereignty should first demonstrate, its ability to construct a civil society, to provide democratic elections and other elementary democratic norms. Among not recognized or partially recognized states, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, on a level of independence of elections and a legal order, is the outsider though still more recently the Karabakh society quite successfully showed good examples of the right order and democracy. Now, in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, in essence, there is no political management, and is, completely obedient to a management of Armenia local administration. Parliamentary and presidential elections in NKR were spent at rigid work of an administrative resource, rough pressure upon opposition and any groups and persons, who do not enter into a command of authority, were supposed. After the Fall of 2008 when Karabakh has was confronted before a reality of national catastrophe, the administration of NKR, political groups and the organizations, and also, military command became rather anxious and showed confusion that has affected and understanding of a political management in Armenia that led the country to a state of catastrophe. In Karabakh repeatedly and many political groups openly expresses, that the Madrid principles are a

condition for destruction of Armenian people in this area. The Karabakh society is ready to changes, both the local administration understands necessity of changes also, but the management of Armenia adapted to so many present methods of management, that it was not in the condition to promote these changes. The Karabakh society, undoubtedly, has potential for development and creations of various democratic elements, but Yerevan, still, is interested in deduction in obedience of this people, which does not participate at all during definition of the destiny. About what international recognition can there be a speech in such absolutely unacceptable conditions?

Sharply enough there is problem of Javahk, the region occupied mainly by Armenians where authorities of Georgia are trying to pursue a policy of replacing Armenians, ignoring and discrediting of their culture and social interests. The politics in Armenia, which tries to mend relations with Georgia, recently, under influence of rigid circumstances, became more basic. Armenia understands, various groups have no influence in Javahk, and their activity only promotes policy in Georgia, thus Armenia tries to amend this position by direct negotiations with Georgia herself. Nevertheless, the organizations of the Diaspora could develop a more concrete plan to work for protecting the interests of Armenians in Javahk on international level. It is necessary to consider, that the situation in Southern Caucasus has noticeably changed also the Western community, which now is more critically considering the external and internal policy of authorities in Georgia. The world powers, in some cases take a solid position, and in other cases, take a mixed position toward Georgia. The Armenian government has tried to close in on criminal circles in Javahk , trying to suppress public organizations to exclude any free-thinking and attempts to develop a civil society; however, it is absolutely clear, that only public organizations, given the present conditions of pressure from the Georgian authorities, can protect the rights of the Armenian population. As a result, many public organizations have become weaker, have reduced their influence, in a part from them have been simply being liquidated by efforts of authorities of Georgia. By means of the given policy, authorities in Armenia tried to make settlements with Georgia, which was not only naive, but also dangerous in the current conditions. Nevertheless, the Armenian population in Javahk is strong enough and is capable to resist external forces, and has found within itself the force to not only to resist discrimination and repressive Georgian policy, but also, rise to level those groups, which have supported authorities of Armenia.

In Armenia, Nagorno-Karabakh and in region of Javahk there was a difficult situation that was caused by internal and external conditions. In the given conditions, people of Diaspora

should understand, that relations with the historical homeland, should not be limited to connections with authorities, but with wide public, political and intellectual circles. Former models and motives of behavior of structures of the Diaspora have become archaic and unjustified. There were new conditions and pleas and it is necessary to be able to answer them. Armenians in Karabakh have stood up to the occasion and reconsidered a present domestic situation, and how to provide their participation in foreign policy. In any case, the Armenian government has began to understand, that isolating NKR from the international relations has led to loss of flexibility and efficiency of foreign policy in Armenia. But the key to the solutions of problems is not in the current vertical scheme of management when decisions go down from top to down, but in a revolutionary position of people that should be supported by a society in Armenia and in the Diaspora.

Much to our regret, during the past years, the organizations of the Diaspora have not defined their positions on problems Karabakh and Javahk. Similar to the many political parties and the organizations in Armenia, people of the Diaspora pretend, that the declared Madrid principles in settling the Karabakh issue are, though also are a compromise, but they are positive and are able to lead a situation in region to the long-term cooperation. Neither the organizations of the Diaspora, nor the traditional political parties of the Diaspora presented are in Armenia, and have not specified their opinion to the Madrid principles. The Diaspora needs a wider and fair discussion, in understanding of real threats and risks, which take place in world politics to understand the processes occurring in Armenia.

The international community has understood, that interests of Armenia and the Diaspora do not always coincide, and sometimes are in the candid contradiction. In this relationship, there is a question of whether there should the organization of the Diaspora to follow with all authorities of Armenia, or provide real political answers? At least, the events of 2009 when contradictions between the Armenian government and the organizations of the Diaspora had come to light became a lesson for many who hoped for ability to influence authorities when the conformism became the founding position. The people of the Diaspora should be more critical to a policy in Armenia and to the situation, which has developed in Karabakh and should to try to participate in political processes in Armenia, to influence a situation in NKR.

It is not a secret, that Azerbaijan, possessing significant incomes from exporting oil and gas, actively increases its arms, gets more and more military techniques and essentially

tries to raise a level of its armed forces. Much of their given processes and efforts are of concern in the area of proliferation, but the fact remains that in the region of Southern Caucasus there is a arms race that influences the intensity of weapons obtained. Many factors, including positions taken by the world powers, render constraining influence on the behavior and ambitions of Azerbaijan, but the system of obtaining safety in region, which is based on observance of balances of forces, breaks down more and more. Turkey plays a new role of the regional strong and influential state, but collides with resistance, not only with its opponents, but also with its allies. In Turkey, this irritates its elite and leads to confrontation of its relations with its neighbors and the states, which try to strengthen the positions in region, and ignores interests of Turkey. Turkey tries to solve regional problems, strengthening its position, but it is impossible. Turkey has joined the regional struggle for influence, and that should be reflected in behavior of Azerbaijan. Meaning, a situation in Southern Caucasus, which is at the claim of the large states and system factors of restraint of war, can lose their value. War in Southern Caucasus, including under the initiative of Azerbaijan, can begin all according to political logic and contrary to various system factors. During the years, political analysts in Armenia have confirmed that new war is impossible, which this was correctly forecasted. Now, new forecasts are expressed by rather constrained image, but, nevertheless, are that fair war can become a reality at any moment. Questions arise to solving the problem - in what form and scale will Turkey take in the new war, and whether this war will develop into a bigger regional war with participation of many states? Most likely, war to be limited to collision of Azerbaijan and Armenia, but the material and military support will come from various states. In any case, Armenia, with the pressure of huge forces, will require huge expenses in material and military resources. It also is the central plea for the Armenian Diaspora that should take a more active role in new war. Political and public organizations of the Diaspora should be ready to develop of movement of volunteers, and to support the victims in under the name of their homeland and ultimately, reach victory. Is the Diaspora is ready to participate? Is the Diaspora is ready to such accept the turn of events? Also, the question lies in whether Armenian Diaspora will prefer capitulation of their homeland, a concession that will lead to catastrophe, to approval of the Madrid principles or are capable to support the homeland at any time is a heavy test. There has come a time when conversations on patriotism and participation in various humanitarian actions are not perceived as real business, there has come time of active preparation for probable war. In this relationship, it is necessary to understand, that the Madrid principles it

at all real the scheme of settlement, and made sense, while in region there was an imitation of process of settlement. All the interested parties, including intermediaries in negotiations, very well understand this. The Madrid principles, actually, means national catastrophe, and any politician in Armenia will agree that with realization of the given principles, Armenia will sign its own the death sentence. Therefore, all hopes for the Madrid principles, as on a way out, are no more than illusion of the population.